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SUBJECT: PKK Issue: Update on Violence and Political Developments  
(September 14 to 30, 2006)

REF: ANKARA 5398 and previous

(U) Sensitive but unclassified - please protect accordingly.

1.(SBU) This is another in a series of periodic reports on PKK violence in Turkey. Our primary sources for these reports are mainstream Turkish press services, such as the Anatolian News Agency, and international wire services. While these are more reliable than most Turkish press sources, they are not necessarily unimpeachable. Another source is the Turkish Armed Forces General Staff (TGS) website which documents contacts/clashes with the PKK. Press services sympathetic to the PKK, such as Neu-Isenburg People's Defense Forces and Firat News Agency, tend to report higher numbers of the Turkish Security Forces casualties and are often otherwise unreliable.

2.(U) During the September 14-30 period, the PKK killed four Turkish security members and wounded three. In clashes, the PKK killed one soldier and a village guard in Van. Another soldier was injured when a mine went off in Diyarbakir province. During the same period, Turkish security forces killed eight PKK terrorists in clashes in Van and Sirnak provinces. Meanwhile, one boy was killed and two were injured when they played with an explosive on the Siirt-Eruh highway. Security forces detonated or seized landmines, hand-grenades, RPGs, rifles and C4 and A4 plastic explosives in different locations. On September 15, a bomb went off in a minibus near the police recreation building in Igdir as the police were watching a movie on the big screen. Many sportsmen, police officers and teachers were injured. The Igdir Police Chief alleged that it was a PKK bomb; he guessed that it was either A-4 or C-4. There have been no reports on arrests.

13. (U) Following are political comments by Turkish and Kurdish officials:

-- TURKISH OFFICIALS:

- Retired General Edip Baser, Turkey's special envoy for anti-terrorism, on September 15, shared with the press his impressions of the meeting he had with Joseph Ralston, his US counterpart. Baser said that Ralston was determined to wage a struggle against the PKK. "I know him as an honest and trustworthy person. I got the impression that the United States shares Turkey's determination," he said.

- Land Forces Commander General Ilker Basbug, speaking at a murdered soldier's September 16 funeral service, said, "The struggle of the security forces is an armed struggle, and it will continue until

this bloody terrorist organization has been eliminated, and until no terrorists remain either in the rural areas or in the cities. Let no one have the slightest doubt on this. Other modes of action that could be contemplated apart from this merely amount to concessions to the terrorist organization." (COMMENT: In the past, Basbug has spoken publicly about the need for non-military solutions to the PKK problem. END COMMENT.)

- In a September 25 speech in New York, Foreign Minister Gul noted that the PKK had operated for years in an unfriendly regime (Saddam's Iraq), but now it continued its acts in a friendly country administered by allied countries (e.g., the Coalition) of Turkey. "This situation is very dangerous. I cannot understand why the terrorist organization is active in a country which is under control," Gul said. "We expect our friends and allies to assist Turkey in its fight against terrorism," he stressed.

-- KURDISH VIEWS:

- DTP Chairman Ahmet Turk on September 11, 2006, made an appeal to the PKK for a ceasefire. He said, "The PKK would abide by this call which was not an empty appeal. Weapons must be silenced but everyone should not just sit and do nothing only because a ceasefire is achieved. After the violence stops a democratic solution should be found to the Kurdish problem for violence not to ever come back."

14. (U) Following are selected columns on the topic:

- Enis Berberoglu in September 23 "Hurriyet" wrote that the security officials believed that by the end of the month the PKK would declare an unconditional ceasefire indefinitely. All indications reportedly showed that guns might be silenced. He asserted that the decrease in the number of coffins coming from the Southeast would

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allow politics to take a deep breath but the risk of terrorism would continue. Berberoglu stressed that the politicians should not be remaining idle during a ceasefire since the life of the GOT then might not be as long as a ceasefire.

- Ibrahim Karagul in September 26 "Yeni Safak" accused the U.S. of telling lies to Turkey on the PKK. He alleged that certain circles in the Iraq-Turkey-U.S. triangle were dragging Turkey to sit at a negotiation table. Karagul referred to two options for thousands of troops that Turkey deployed along the border: These troops would be used either in a U.S.-Israel operation against Iran, or participate along with Iran and Syria in a major operation.

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